

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-19 are pending. Claims 1-16 stand under final rejection. Claims 17-19 stand withdrawn from consideration under a non-final restriction requirement.

Amendments

The amendments to Claims 1, 11 and 14 specify that the process uses a roll of composite web and/or that the composite web is conveyed from a roll. Support for the amendment is on page 5, lines 13-15 and page 6, lines 17-18 of the present Application. Amendment to Claim 14 also converts the claim to independent form.

Applicant cancels Claims 17-19 without prejudice.

New Claim 20 has support on page 4, lines 20-22.

The total number of independent claims is less than three, the total number of claims is less than 20 and there are no multidependent claims. Therefore, Applicant does not expect additional fees associated with these amendments.

Restriction Requirement

Applicant affirms election of Claims 1-16 under the pending restriction requirement and cancels Claims 17-19, without prejudice. New Claim 20 is as process claim dependent from Claim 1 so Applicant believes it falls within the scope of elected claims.

35 USC 112 Rejection

The pending Office Action is silent in regards to the prior rejection of Claim 9 and 10 under 35 USC §112. Therefore, Applicant presumes that the rejection has been withdrawn.

102(b) Rejection

Claims 1-16 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by both Londrigan (US 5,837,743) and Gluck (US 4,572,865). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Neither Londrigan nor Gluck disclose using a composite web comprising a low binder fiber mat and a support mat from a roll, as each claim of the present Application requires. Applicant's prior response (17 June 2005) addresses the advantages of using a composite web in roll form as described in the Application. Such advantages include facilitation unrolling low binder mat without tearing it apart, conveying low binder mat without any stretching it and allowing conveyance of the low binder mat in the process

without touching the low binder mat to rollers. In view of this material difference of the presently claimed process from that of Londrigan and Gluck, Applicant finds the presently claimed invention novel over both Londrigan and Gluck.

Furthermore, neither Londrigan nor Gluck teach, suggest or in any way guide one of ordinary skill in the art to consider using a composite web from a roll in their processes. In fact, use of such a roll would conflict with the process as illustrated in the figures of each reference. Therefore, Applicant believes the presently claimed invention is non-obvious in view of Londrigan and Gluck, alone or in combination.

Claim 2 is further patentable over Gluck by requiring the low binder expandable fiber mat to become substantially distributed within the polymeric foam. The present Application precisely defines "substantially distributed" as meaning any plane parallel to the foam's opposing major surfaces intersects at least one fiber (*see*, page 10, lines 10-13). The process of Gluck requires that the expanding froth push the reinforcing mats to positions adjacent to facing mats (see, column 9, lines 44-47). Even if, as Examiner suggests, the reinforcing mat becomes permeated with froth the teaching does not describe reinforcing fiber that is "substantially distributed" within the polymeric foam – rather specifically limited in location to the very edge of the foam by the facing mats.

In view of these arguments, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of Claims 1-16, withdrawal of the pending rejections and issuance of a notice of allowance for claims 1-16 and 20 at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven W. Mork
Registration No. 48,258
Phone: (989) 636-8434

P. O. Box 1967
Midland, MI 48641-1967
akm